

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director for Administration
VIA: Associate Deputy Director for Administration
FROM: Corporate Data Task Force
SUBJECT: Corporate Data Elements

1. On 7 July, the ADDA tasked us to "come up with the basic elements of a corporate data base." He also gave us one month to accomplish the task. Submitted herewith is our report. Our recommendations are in paragraph 7.

2. We first met as a group on 10 July to discuss our tasking. It was decided that each member would focus on his/her office to identify "common" data elements. We arranged for Chief, Corporate Systems Development Division/Development Group/OIT, [redacted] to brief us. We subsequently met several times to discuss our individual findings and to consolidate them into a single report.

3. During the course of our study, we found that OIT had taken the relevant OP PERSIGN (HRS-2), data elements and added the additional ones needed by the OP "ICARE", the OTE "TEAMS" and the OMS "MIDAS" projects to make a list of approximately 128 common data elements. This was a good effort under the circumstances. The problem in pursuing only this procedure, however, is that the common elements are identified after rather than before the project design phase. OIT is put in the position of identifying what resulted rather than what was planned.

4. In preparing our lists, we have used generic terms to identify elements. We have not attempted in our limited time to make decisions on how the elements should be written, i.e., limit the number of synonyms that can be used per generic term. We have defined common data elements as those which are or will be used by multiple DA offices to do their substantive work. We did not include an office if the element would be used only for information or career management purposes. We accepted OIT's definition of a corporate system as one that "is of Agency-wide interest, directly affects the management of Agency resources, performs primarily administrative functions supporting mid-level to senior Agency managers, and is typically managed by a DDA component."

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5. The attachment shows the elements that we have identified, the offices that have responsibility for the integrity of the elements, and the offices that will be using them. We consider the common data element list only a beginning; additional elements should be added after further review of current and future projects. Some elements have been identified for the corporate system although their usage at this time may be more unique to a particular office than common throughout the DDA. We still believe their wider Agency usage warrants inclusion. We also have identified a "MGT" column to indicate the elements that past experience has shown will be requested by managers. *MGMT*

6. There still exists too many situations where different codes and different text fields are used for the same generic term. These differences cause confusion and inefficiency and make the programs more complex than often is necessary for the desired results. This is an area that needs immediate attention. The attachment might be a good source to start making decisions to ensure that we use the same codes and text fields, unless an exception can be justified. This problem also points up the need for the DA to have a senior officer whose responsibility it is to make such decisions and provide general DA guidance to office project teams.

7. We recommend that you:

a. Require each DA office to review soon its existing and pending projects to standardize codes and text fields within that office.

data
b. Designate a senior officer to be responsible for decisions regarding ~~design~~ standards. This officer could be assisted by a *must* directorate-wide committee or task force but the officer would be the final arbiter.

data element
how data elements will be input, stored, and retrieved
characteristics such as
c. Establish a task force to standardize for the directorate, *how data elements will be input, stored, and retrieved*. The list of common data elements in the report should be the starting point. (This task force should be convened after the offices have had a chance to review their internal situation per recommendation a.)

data element
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d. Include in the development of all projects a review of the data elements to determine which are corporate and which are project unique and which corporate elements are common to multiple DA offices.

Chairperson,
Corporate Data Task Force

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